



**Policy Subject/Title:** COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE GRANTS POLICY

**Policy Number:** C/001

---

**Responsible Officer:** Director Human Resources and Customer Service

**Legislative or Regulatory Reference:** Local Government Regulation 2012

**Authorised by:** Somerset Regional Council

**Authorised on:** 23 July 2008 (Doc Id 331891)

**Review / Amendment dates:**  
14 July 2010 (Doc Id 464181)  
24 July 2012 (Doc Id 629318)  
8 October 2014 (Doc Id 781966)  
11 November 2015 (Doc Id 852057)  
11 October 2017 (Doc Id 995893)  
28 March 2018 [Doc Id 1024321]  
27 November 2019 (Doc Id 1160557)  
29 June 2022 (Doc Id 1417072)

## 1. OBJECTIVE

This policy sets out the circumstances under which Council may make grants to assist community organisations or representative sportspeople, and outlines the processes for management of those grants.

## 2. BACKGROUND

### 2.1 Legal

The *Local Government Regulation 2012* contains the following:

#### **164. Requirement to keep record of particular matters**

- (1) *A local government must keep a written record stating the following:*
  - (a) *The risks the local government's operations are exposed to, to the extent they are relevant to financial management;*
  - (b) *The control measures adopted to manage the risks;*
- (2) *The local government must keep, with the record, a copy of each of the following -*
  - (a) *its community grants policy*

#### **194. Grants of community organisations**

*A local government may give a grant to a community organisation only –*

- (a) *If the local government is satisfied –*
  - (i) *The grant will be used for a purpose that is in the public interest; and*
  - (ii) *The community organisation meets the criteria stated in the community grants policy; and*
- (b) *In a way that is consistent with the local government's community grants policy.*

#### **195. Community grants policy**

- (1) *The local government must prepare and adopt a policy about local government grants to community organisations (a community grants policy) which includes the criteria for a community organisation to be eligible for a grant from the local government.*

#### **Schedule Dictionary**

*Community organisations means –*

- (a) *An entity that carries on activities for a public purpose; or*
- (b) *Another entity whose primary object is not directed at making a profit.*

### 2.2 Principles

*Grants should be provided in an equitable manner. That is, grants should not benefit one group of the community and exclude another. The arrangements for making grants*

*should be made on a whole of area basis.*

*Grants should be provided to achieve an identified benefit to the community generally. The Council should ensure that the benefits are obtained. The process of awarding grants should be open and accountable.*

### **3. PURPOSE**

The policy is intended to provide a structure and process for making grants to community organisations which is open, transparent, legal, equitable and furthers the aims and objectives of Council.

Council's strategic goals and objectives for the Community Assistance Grants program include:

- Promoting community assistance grants to community organisations for projects, events and services that benefit the community
- Enhancing Council's profile in the community.

### **4. SCOPE**

#### *4.1 What this policy applies to*

This policy covers:

- (a) direct financial or in-kind support for community organisations, projects, events or services within the Somerset region;
- (b) payment of general rates and Council cost recovery fees, on behalf of community organisations;
- (c) assets given to community organisations;
- (d) payments to individuals as excellence bursaries.

#### *4.2 What this policy does not apply to*

- (i) This policy does not apply to grants or concessions requested by commercial organisations or individuals other than those referred to in 4.1(d) above;
- (ii) For example, applications will not be considered for the payment of insurance premiums, water supply and sewerage accounts from Queensland Urban Utilities, other utility accounts such as electricity and telecommunications or the following charges levied with Council general rates:
  - Utility charges;
  - Separate rates and charges;
  - Special rates and charges; and
  - State Government Emergency Levy.

### **5. POLICY**

A The main process

In granting direct financial support for community organisations, projects, events or services, Council will use the following process:

- As part of Council's annual budget considerations, an amount will be decided upon which is available for making grants to community organisations. This decision may specify amounts for the different types of grants covered by this policy. A limit for individual grants may be set.
- Advertisements will be placed in local media for two (2) funding rounds per financial year (with the first round of each financial year including rates remission applications for that financial year). The advertisement will detail the availability and request applications be received by a specified date, addressing the selection criteria. However, organisations may be limited to two (2) applications per financial year with a lower priority given to applicants that have been funded within the previous 12 months.
- Applicants shall meet one of the following classifications:
  - (a) a sporting / leisure / cultural organisation which is a non-profit group whose primary aim is to advance the social, cultural, leisure or sporting needs of its members and/or residents of the Somerset region;
  - (b) a charitable organisation that is a non-profit group whose primary aim is to improve the quality of life of under-privileged sections of the community within the Somerset region;
  - (c) a community service provider whose primary aims are to provide a community service to all or specific sections of the community within the Somerset region;
  - (d) an educational institution within the Somerset region.
- Applicants for community assistance grants must be either incorporated entities or the grants must be auspiced by an incorporated organisation
- When the advertisement has been issued, Councillors and Council staff may encourage organisations to apply, but should not indicate if an application is likely to succeed.

The following criteria may be used to assess grant applications:

- Maximum of one (1) application per funding round (total of two (2) per financial year) with maximum funding of \$5,000 per application unless exceptional circumstances can be demonstrated.
- Funding for events held within the Somerset region will be considered at the following levels:
 

Small scale event	up to \$ 500
Large scale event	up to \$ 1,000
Annual Agricultural Shows	up to \$ 1,500
Large scale regional event	up to \$ 2,500
- Additional consideration may be provided to grant applications which involve a co-contribution from the applicant and/or where the applicant has sought additional grant funding, sponsorship or donations from other sources for the relevant project.
- Additional consideration may be provided to grant applications which benefit a larger number of Council residents.
- Because Council's intent is to use grants to enhance its profile in the community,

Council would prefer not to provide funding for fundraising events but rather fund the cause that is the subject of the fund-raising event directly where appropriate.

- Council will give lower priority to applicants that have been funded within the previous 12 months.
- Council would prefer to not fund general recurrent costs of community organisations such as uniforms, insurance or salaries.
- Council would prefer not to fund government entities through community assistance grants. Council will not fund entities that operate more than 30 gaming machines through community assistance grants.
- Council will not approve funding for projects, activities or events if the project, activity or event is conducted on privately owned property without relevant Council approvals and insurances, or the proposed project, activity or event would entail improvements to this property which could potentially benefit an individual or business.
- Applicants shall be required to:
  - (a) demonstrate the community benefit that the project, event or service will provide;
  - (b) provide a copy of the organisation's most recently audited financial statements where the organisation is legally required to be audited; or a copy of the organisation's most recent unaudited financial statements together with relevant verification statement and copies of bank statements at the balance date (balance date being the closing date of financial statements representing all of the organisation's bank accounts and loans);
  - (c) provide details of the organisation's status in relation to GST;
  - (d) provide quotations, where applicable, to support the amounts included in the application;
  - (e) provide details demonstrating that any other approvals required for the application have been obtained. For example, where the application is for funding the building of a shed on Council land, the applicant must obtain an approval from Council, as the property owner, prior to lodging the funding application;
  - (f) provide details of any financial contribution to be made by the organisation or from another grant program, as preference may be given to applications that include such co-contributions;
  - (g) acknowledge their understanding that where a community assistance grant is provided for the purchase of a non-current asset and the asset is sold within twelve (12) months after the date on which Council grants the funds for the purchase, the grant provided must be repaid to the Council.
- Applications that do not include all supporting documentation will not be considered further.
- After the closing date, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) or delegate will consider all the applications and assess them against the criteria. In this process the CEO or delegate may request additional information from the applicants and may conduct interviews.
- The CEO or delegate will make recommendations in relation to the grants to be awarded. Council will consider the recommendations and decide what grants are to be

awarded.

- Notwithstanding the closing dates of funding rounds, applications submitted outside of funding rounds may be considered by Council where the community organisation can demonstrate exceptional circumstances that would necessitate application outside of specified funding rounds.
- Councillors have no discretionary funds available to them, and as such cannot as an individual make any decision regarding the allocation of Community Assistance Grants.

#### B *Acknowledgements*

Grant recipients are required to acknowledge that Council has donated towards the organisation in any promotion for the event / service and at the event.

#### C *Acquittals*

Successful applicants will be required to lodge an acquittal statement evidencing the expenditure of the grant. Any unspent funding must be returned to Council. Acquittal statements are to be lodged prior to the end of the financial year for which the grant was awarded, unless an extension is granted for the expenditure of the funds. Successful applicants will be precluded from receiving further grants until previous grants have been acquitted.

#### D *Time limit on claiming grants*

Grantees are required to claim grants via a tax invoice within three (3) months of the date of approval unless an extension is sought and granted. Grants after this period where no extension has been approved will be considered to be cancelled. Notification of grant approval will advise of the time limit and potential implications.

#### E *Somerset Excellence Bursaries*

Council may decide to make a grant to individuals and / or teams in order to encourage academic, cultural and sporting excellence.

Applications for assistance shall be in writing and provide details of the selection as either an individual or team at Regional, State or National level; the venue where the event / competition is to take place; details of the achievements leading up to the selection; and confirmation of their residence within the Somerset Region.

The level of financial assistance to be granted is based on level of selection as follows:

- |   |                                 |
|---|---------------------------------|
| • Regional Level selection  | \$250                           |
| • State Level selection   | \$500                           |
| • National Level selection  | \$750                           |
| • Selection for an event hosted internationally                                   | \$1,000                         |
| • Team application (Regional, State or National)<br>four (4) or more individuals. | Up to \$2,000 per team/group of |

Successful excellence bursary applicants will be required to lodge an acquittal statement evidencing the expenditure of the grant. Any unspent funding must be returned to Council. Acquittal statements are to be lodged prior to the end of the financial year for which the grant was awarded, unless an extension is sought and granted for the expenditure of the funds. Successful applicants will be precluded from receiving further grants until previous grants have been acquitted.

Somerset excellence bursaries are not community grants as defined by the Local Government Regulation notwithstanding that they are to be funded from the same budget allocation as community assistance grants. Excellence Bursaries will be considered and approved at Officer level as delegated and reported to Council's Ordinary meeting monthly.

## **6. CONTROLS**

The expenditure will be subject to the normal accounting controls.

No person may give an indication of the likely success of an application until the decision has been made by Council.

Grant guidelines will not support projects, events, activities, achievements or services that commence prior to the grant application being approved by Council.

A summary of all grants provided shall be included in the annual report.

## **7. DATE OF RESOLUTION**

This original policy was approved by the Chief Executive Office and adopted by the Somerset Regional Council at the Ordinary Meeting of 23 July 2008.

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized, cursive name followed by a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Date: 27 November 2019